

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A sealing arrangement for sealing a machine element ~~with a sealing ring and leak detection means~~, comprising:

a support ring mounted to a housing;

a sealing ring including a lip seal that contacts the machine element;

a sensor for detecting a leak, said sensor mounted to at least one of said support ring and said sealing ring; and

a depot for picking up the leak, said depot being disposed between said support ring and said sealing ring,

wherein said depot being is monitored by said sensor,

~~wherein~~ said depot consists of an absorbent and/or swellable material~~[[;]]~~, and

said depot is arranged so that a delayed leak detection by the sensor is possible.

2. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said depot is formed of an absorbent ring-shaped disk.

3. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein the depot is centered in the leak-detection means by a surrounding ring-shaped bulge.

4. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein the depot comprises a nonwoven material.

5. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sensor is fastened on a carrier plate.

6. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 5, wherein said depot and/or said carrier plate with said sensor are disposed in a supporting ring.

7. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 6, wherein said carrier plate is sustained by a groove located peripherally on a side of an axial leg of said supporting ring facing the machine element.

8. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sensor is positioned at a distance from the depot by a spacer.

9. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 6, wherein said sealing ring and said supporting ring form an intermediate space for leak pickup.

10. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 9, wherein an annular element comprising an absorbent material is disposed in said intermediate space.

11. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein an annular disk is provided on a side of said sealing ring that faces its surroundings, said disk comprising an absorbent material and being positioned ahead of said leak-detection means.

12. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 11, wherein said disk consists of a nonwoven material.

13. (Currently Amended) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sealing ring is inserted into ~~[[a]]~~ said supporting ring.

14. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein, with the aid of a supporting ring, said leak-detection means are disposed in a recess located on an outer periphery of said sealing ring.

15. (Currently Amended) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, further comprising an elastomeric layer disposed on said supporting ring that has at least one sealing lip that rests on the machine element in a sealing manner or is disposed at a small distance therefrom.

16. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sensor detects optical changes of said depot.

17. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 16, wherein said sensor consists of an reflected infrared light barrier.

18. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sensor consists of a mechanical system detecting volume changes of said depot.

19. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein said sensor consists of a condenser; and
said depot acts as a dielectric.

20. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein a signal transmission from said sensor occurs without a cable.

21. (Original) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, wherein a signal transmission from said sensor occurs through a round cable or a flat strip cable.

22. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 21, wherein said cable passes through a cable passage lined with an elastomer.

23. (Withdrawn) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 22, wherein said elastomer of said cable passage is connected to said cable by adhesion.

24. (Currently Amended) The sealing arrangement according to Claim 1, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein said supporting ring that is provided with, on an outer periphery of ~~its~~ an axial leg, a layer of elastomer.